

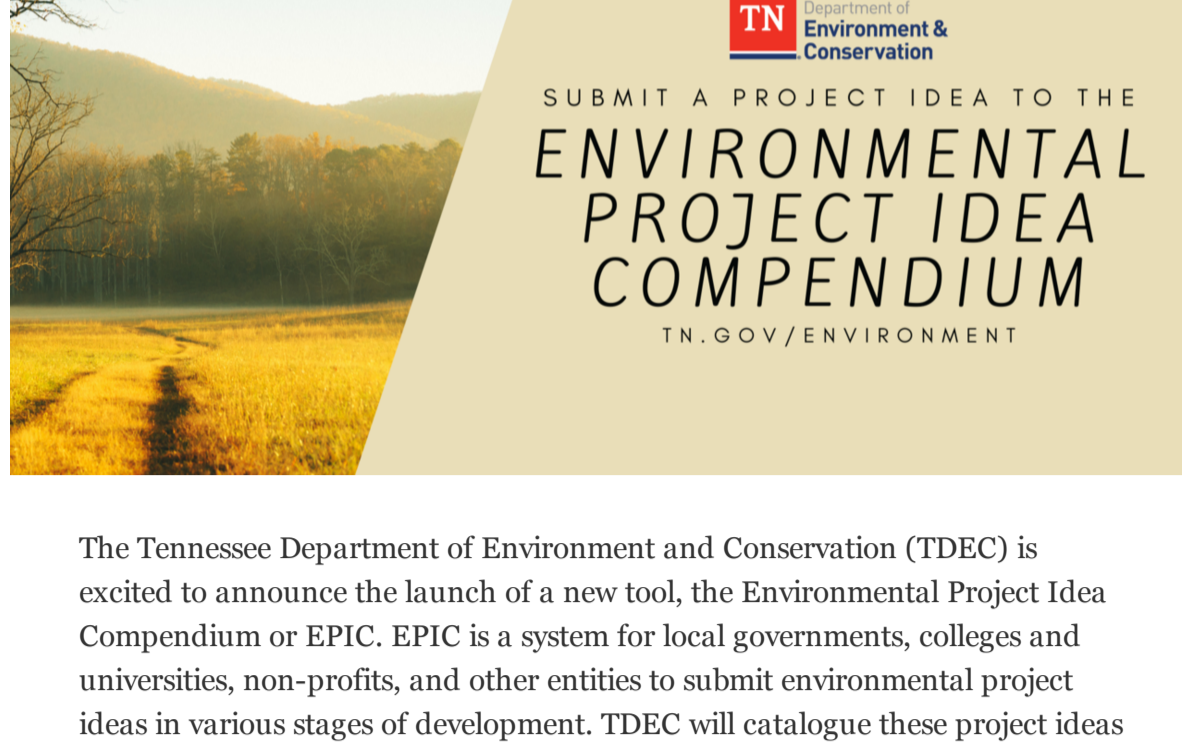
Higher Education Sustainability Network Newsletter

Spring 2022

Tennessee's Higher Education Sustainability Initiative serves to provide a network for faculty, administrators, staff, students, and organizations who interact with Tennessee's higher education institutions to come together to collaborate, support, share, and advise on sustainability best practices.

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Environmental Project Idea Compendium



The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) is excited to announce the launch of a new tool, the Environmental Project Idea Compendium or EPIC. EPIC is a system for local governments, colleges and universities, non-profits, and other entities to submit environmental project ideas in various stages of development. TDEC will catalogue these project ideas and maintain them in an internal database. The purpose of this database is to aggregate project ideas from groups across Tennessee to promote collaboration, align potential projects with funding and/or financing sources, and proactively prepare for future, potentially time-sensitive funding opportunities. EPIC is also where you can list your project ideas to participate in the [Tennessee College/Underserved Community Partnership Program](#).

Interested in learning more and submitting a project idea to EPIC? Click here to visit our website.

2022 Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards



Deadline for Nominations is March 31, 2022

The Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards are presented annually to recognize outstanding achievements by individuals, educational institutions, local governments, businesses, organizations, and agencies for successful environmental projects and conservation measures. A panel of judges representing agricultural, conservation, forestry, environmental, and academic professionals will select award recipients based on criteria including level of project or program completion, innovation, and public education. Award recipients will be announced in May 2021.

Click here to learn more about the Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards, different award categories, and to apply.

Campus Race to Zero Waste



The Campus Race to Zero Waste (formerly RecycleMania) is a friendly competition amongst higher education institutions across the US and Canada that galvanizes the student bodies to get involved with sustainability efforts. This year there are three universities in Tennessee participating: Austin Peay, UT Knoxville, and UT Martin. In addition to the competition, the event provides tools to help advance campus recycling and waste reduction efforts as well as planning resources and activity ideas. It is an opportunity for schools to reduce waste and decrease their environmental footprint as well as benchmark their waste minimization and recycling efforts against other campuses. Schools can also earn credit for [AASHE STARS](#) (Campus Engagement) and the [President's Climate Commitment](#). Although the deadline has passed to compete this year, registration to participate for 2023 will open in September. There are different levels of participation for the Campus Race to Zero Waste challenge dependent upon a school's goals and ability to track and report weight data. For more information and helpful resources, please visit <https://recyclemania.org/>.

Tennessee Highlight

Maryville College Participates in TDEC's 2nd Annual Zero Waste Day

by Dr. Jay Clark, Director of Environmental & Sustainable Initiatives



As part of TDEC's 2nd Zero Waste Day event, Maryville College students were encouraged to evaluate their own personal behaviors and take action to reduce their waste footprint. Students were asked to fill out and sign a pledge form to pursue a specific action to reduce their waste. Some of the pledged actions by students included commitments to taking shorter showers, using less single-use plastic, shopping at second-hand stores for clothing, conserving electricity by turning off lights and devices when not in use, and repairing clothes and other necessities as opposed to buying new clothes or items. Other activities included a display and quiz about waste and waste reduction outside our dining hall, a class about how to sew buttons and repair your own clothing, and outdoor activities provided by the college's [Mountain Challenge Program](#). Their Zero Waste Day was a great success, and they're look forward to making it an even bigger event in 2022!

Click here to learn more about TDEC's Zero Waste Day.

National Highlight



Georgia State University Assists Duck Hill, MS with Creating a Website Presence

Through the EPA College and Underserved Community Partnership Program (EPA CUPP), Georgia State University, (EPA CUPP), Georgia State University, Department of Computer Information Systems (CIS) assisted a small, rural community in Mississippi with creating connections in their community. Duck Hill, Mississippi has made major strides in

improving their town's infrastructure over the last few years. Their previous accomplishments include obtaining grants to improve their wastewater drainage system, participating in [Local Foods, Local Places](#) program, creating a leadership development institute and Park Rangers logo program. Due to all of the recent improvements, the town now needs a way to communicate its accomplishments to the community in the digital world. However, the Duck Hill communities have no IT professionals and little online presence.

As part of EPA CUPP, Georgia State CIS students assisted the Duck Hill community with building their digital presence on the Internet to serve the community. The project kicked off in fall 2021 in multiple phases. In phase 1, a team of CIS senior students worked with Duck Hill to meet with different stakeholders of the community to understand their needs and visions. The student team collected the user requirements and created a prototype of the community website, which communicates information about difference services provided by Duck Hill. Phase 2 of the project will be completed in spring 2022 where students are creating the website. The student team will present phase 1 of the project and share their learning experience at the 2022 National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program in Washington, DC. They will talk about the impact they made on the community, the social responsibilities they have as students, and the contributions they can make as IT professionals. Learn more about this project [HERE](#).

Events and Opportunities

Food Waste Awareness Week



Join us for a week full of virtual engagement and educational opportunities, state-wide food drives, and regional events featuring food waste awareness activities such as locally-made upcycled bread beer, live food waste cooking demos, local resources and representatives, and more!

We are excited to announce our first Inaugural Food Waste Awareness Week, April 4-9, 2022! Tune into our Facebook and Instagram accounts to learn about reducing food waste and increasing food recovery and diversion in Tennessee. We also invite businesses, organizations, and educational institutions to become a Partner during the week to help us share the messaging. To become a Partner, sign up [HERE](#).

[TDEC Grants](#)

[Federal Grants](#)

[Tennessee State Parks Events](#)

[Tire Environmental Act Program; Proposal Submission Deadline April 15, 2022](#)

[AASHE Conference \(Streaming Live October 18, 26 and November 3, 2022\)](#)

[America East Sustainability Conference \(AASHE members get 30% off\); June 7-9, 2022](#)

[EPA's Energy Transitions in Underserved Communities Request for Applications; Deadline April 28, 2022](#)

Previous Newsletters



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Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation

Office of Policy and Sustainable Practices

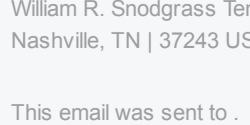
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[Tennessee Higher Education Sustainability Initiative](#)

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